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Office of the Administrative Director - Public Affairs Office - THE JUDICIARY • STATE OF HAWAII

417 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 206C • ALI'ĪOLANI HALE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2902

TELEPHONE (808) 539-4909 • FAX (808) 539-4801 • www.courts.state.hi.us

Thomas R. Keller
ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Walter M. Ozawa
DEPUTY ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR

Susan Pang Gochros
DIVISION CHIEF, INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIVISION

Marsha E. Kitagawa
PUBLIC AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

NEWS RELEASE

Contact:
Marsha Kitagawa 539-4909

For Media Release:
June 30, 2003

New or Amended State Court Fees Enacted Into Law

Starting tomorrow (July 1, 2003), new administrative fees payable upon the initial filing of most civil filings will be assessed. The new fees authorized by Senate Bill 1134 (S.D. 1, H.D. 1, C.D. 1) are to be used by the State Judiciary to upgrade and modernize its antiquated case management information systems.

In the district courts, a \$20 fee is payable upon the initial filing of all civil cases except those:

- brought by the State or any county or political subdivisions of the State;
- initiated by a petition to temporarily restrain harassment; and
- initiated and conducted in the small claims division of the district court.

A \$50 fee must be paid when initially filing a civil case in the circuit or family courts, including probate, divorce, paternity, and adoption cases. The new law exempts the fee for cases brought by the State or any county or political subdivision of the State.

Act 65, which Governor Linda Lingle signed into law on April 30, 2003, exempts persons subject to domestic abuse, abuse of family or household members, stalking, or sexual assault from paying costs and fees associated with the "filing, issuance, registration, or service of a protection order, or a petition for a protection order, warrant, or witness subpoena issued for the purpose of preventing violent or threatening acts or harassment against, or contact or communication with or physical proximity to, another person."

Act 41, another law effective April 30, increased the parent education surcharge from \$35 to \$50. Separating parents involved in a divorce where either party has a minor child or parties in paternity actions must pay this surcharge to the family court.

Another new law, Act 71, which takes effect Jan. 1, 2004, requires a person sentenced to probation after being convicted of the new offense of habitually operating a vehicle under the influence of an intoxicant, to pay a neurotrauma surcharge of \$25 as a condition of probation.

Fees may be waived by the court for good cause such as a showing of financial hardship.

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